

Whangape.—Fifty-three were present. I was much pleased with the condition of this school. Its prospects are highly encouraging. The Natives were even more enthusiastic about their school than they were at my first visit. Then it offered to them only prospective and uncertain advantages; now they see that it is really a great benefit to their district. A very gratifying change in the manners of the children was plainly perceptible, while their attainments were much higher than I had ventured to expect. This school already deserves to be ranked with the best Native schools in many respects: if the future progress of the children should be equal to what it has been in the past, Whangape will, in three years' time, be equal in all respects to those at Peria and Te Wairoa, and even to the best of the South Island schools. I am sorry to hear, however, that fever has been very prevalent in the district for some months past, and that the school is suffering on that account.

Waima.—Forty-nine children at inspection. Good schools are plentiful in this district, and Waima has one of the best of these. The school is far better than the schoolroom. This is said to be built on some American principle: the walls are without studs. I do not like the principle; it seems to favour the free admission of wind and rain. The Natives would probably be prepared to give a reasonable price for this old building; if so, it would be very advisable to erect a new school-house. Remarkably good work is being done here: improvement in children and in parents is plainly discernible. The good influences of the school are felt all over the Waima Valley. It is pleasing to note that the Natives fully recognize the benefits they are thus deriving. A large number of Natives were present during the examination; most of them took great interest in the proceedings, and were evidently highly gratified, as the work went on, to find that their school was likely to do more than hold its own amongst the other good schools in the district.

It will be seen from the foregoing sketches that nearly all the Hokianga schools are doing good, and some of them excellent, work. There can be no doubt that at present Hokianga has the best group of Native schools in the North Island.

Whangarei.

In the Whangarei District there is now only one Native school. Mr. James S. Clendon, R.M., is the District Superintendent.

Ngunguru.—Fourteen children were inspected. The mistress of this school had been at work but a short time when I visited it. It appeared to be reviving somewhat. There is no reason why there should not be a good school here, though it could hardly be a large one. The teacher appeared to be a favourite with both Maoris and Europeans.

Auckland, Waikato, and Thames.

Mr. G. T. Wilkinson, Native Agent, Auckland, is Superintendent of the district, which contains six village schools and two of the boarding schools subsidized by the Government.

Matakohe.—Eighteen children were present. The inspection was very satisfactory. I was much pleased with everything connected with the carrying-on of the work of the school. The master evidently does his best to get his pupils on, and it is to be regretted that he has not a more favourable field to labour in. Where he is, his efforts are, to a large extent, wasted. There had been serious disagreements amongst the Natives, and they had also been troubled with one of those prophets and doctors that crop up from time to time in Maori settlements, and set everything awry, including the school. Large numbers of Natives from surrounding districts had come to be healed, or, at any rate, to see what was going on. Of course these visitors brought their appetites with them. Meanwhile cultivations were neglected, and the burden of providing for the future was thrown upon Providence, which evidently does not care to help people that act so foolishly. Sickness and death followed these events, as a matter of course, and things are in a bad way at the Native settlements in the Matakohe district. The district has, of course, to suffer a recovery: this will probably be a tedious process. On the whole, this is a very discouraging school.

Pouto Point.—Sixteen children were inspected. The recently-appointed master had just arrived. The new building should answer the purpose well, and there should be a good school here shortly. The teacher has had considerable experience at Te Aute, where he was assistant master; he appears to have made a favourable impression on both Maoris and Europeans.

Otamatea.—Twenty-three children were present at inspection. There has been a very considerable educational revival in this neighbourhood, and the school now bids fair to do well. The Native population is not very large, but all the children of school ages attend. The school is taught half-time by the master, who spends the rest of his time at Oruawharo; as the mistress is very competent to take charge of the Otamatea School during the master's absence, the arrangement works very well. The pupils, and especially the seniors, passed a very good examination.

Oruawharo.—Eighteen children were inspected here. The school had been opened only a short time, and striking results were not to be expected. A good beginning had been made, however, particularly in arithmetic. The district in which the Otamatea and Oruawharo schools are situated is now well provided for. The making of these very satisfactory arrangements has been facilitated to a large extent by the co-operation and assistance of the resident Wesleyan clergyman, to whom the thanks of the department have been tendered.

Kirikiri.—The new school at the Thames is doing satisfactory work. Twenty-six children were present at inspection. Of course the smallness of the percentage obtained is accounted for by the fact that the school had been only a few months open when the examination took place. Judging from what has already been done, I expect that this school will take a good position by-and-by.

Waitetuna.—Only six children were present at inspection, and these answered but poorly; there should be much better results next year. It is fair to the teacher to say that there had been many and serious drawbacks to the success of the school. New buildings had been in course of erection; there had been a total failure of the crops, and parents consequently had to go away to get a living